

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, AR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HILL SPEECH WIDELY REPORTED,
PRAISED BY BUENOS AIRES HERALD

1. REMARKS ON ARGENTINA AND HUMAN RIGHTS MADE BY FORMER AMBASSADOR TO ARGENTINA ROBERT HILL AT A U.S.-ARGENTINE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON IN NEW YORK RECEIVED WIDE PRESS COVERAGE HERE JUNE 29. MOST DAILIES CARRIED LENGTHY EXCERPTS OF THE ADDRESS, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR HILL'S DESCRIPTION OF RECENT ARGENTINE POLITICAL HISTORY, THE TERRORIST THREAT, STRIDES MADE BY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT TO OVERCOME ECONOMIC CHAOS AND TERRORISM, AND THE DANGER THAT THE PRESENT CARTER POLICY ON HUMAN RIGHTS COULD LEAD TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOUTHERN CONE BLOC AGAINST THE U.S. AMBASSADOR HILL IS QUOTED AS COUNSELING "PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING" FOR ARGENTINA AND PARTICULARLY "PATIENCE TO SEE IF THE MODERATE ATTITUDE OF PRESIDENT VIDELA AND HIS SUPPORTERS WILL PREDOMINATE AND ENSURE A GRADUAL RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE."

2. ALTHOUGH SEVERAL OF THE NEWSPAPERS EMPHASIZED AMBASSADOR HILL'S CRITICISM OF THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY, THE ONLY PRESS EDITORIAL COMMENTARY TO DATE WAS PUBLISHED BY THE BUENOS AIRES HERALD (JUNE 29). THE HERALD, WHICH WARMLY
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PRAISED AMBASSADOR HILL FOR CUTTING THROUGH "THE PROPAGANDA, THE CANT AND THE HYPOCRISY THAT CLOUDS THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS", SAID THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S SPEECH WILL INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF ARGENTINA'S PREDICAMENT AND "MAY HELP RESTRAIN THE HOTHEADS IN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WHO HAVE BEEN MAKING INROADS IN THE PREVIOUSLY MORE CAUTIONS STATE DEPARTMENT." THE EDITORIAL WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE VIOLENCE, HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES,

AND DESTRUCTION OF SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS PERPETUATED BY TERRORIST GROUPS AND SAID THAT THE TERRORISTS "CAN HARDLY COMPLAIN IF THE TACTICS THEY EVOLVED ARE USED AGAINST THEM". RECENT SUCCESSES AGAINST THE TERRORISTS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED PARTLY THROUGH VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS JUST AS THE EARLY TERRORIST SUCCESSES WERE ACHIEVED THROUGH VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS, THE EDITORIAL CONTINUED. IT CONCLUDED THAT THE TASK AHEAD OF REBUILDING SOCIETY AND REINSTATING INDIVIDUAL GUARANTEES AND HUMAN RIGHTS REQUIRES THE PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF FRIENDS ABROAD, IN WHICH "MR. HILL'S VOLUNTARY WORK ON OUR BEHALF IS INVALUABLE."

3. COMMENT: THE HERALD, THE MOST OUTSPOKEN AND COURAGEIOUS PUBLICATION IN ARGENTINA ON THE SUBJECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, HAS INCREASINGLY EXPRESSED ITS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE APPROPRIATENESS OF U.S. POLICY IN PUBLICLY ATTACKING AND SANCTIONING ARGENTINA FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. ITS JUNE 29 EDITORIAL WAS THE MOST VEHEMENT TO DATE IN DEFENDING ARGENTINA AGAINST U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, AND APPEARS TO HAVE OVERSHOT THE MARK BY, IN EFFECT, JUSTIFYING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS BATTLE TO CRUSH TERRORISM. PRESS CLIPS OF REMARKS AND COMMENTARY ARE BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT. CHAPLIN

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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